1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

When about four to eight years old the girls wear as festive decoration wooden bracelets, which are sometimes prettily carved.

Boys segregate themselves from girls at an early age. Their first and principal toy is a small bow, which differs from the adults' weapon in having a round cross section (pl. 24, *a*). The first arrows are little rods made from the ribs of palm leaflets (pl. 24, *b*). As the lads grow older, bows and arrows gradually approach the ultimate form, the stave grows flatter, the arrows are feathered and pointed.

Among playthings there are toy guns for shooting maize kernels by means of an elastic strip of bamboo (pl. 23, *g*). Obviously borrowed from Neobrazilians, they share the name of firearms, katõkre (tõk, the report of a gun). Further, the boys have buzzers (pl. 24, *n*), humming tops with a string pulled through the hole in a little board (pl. 24, *i*), small palm-nut tops, miniature imitations of dance masks, animal figurines of wax (pl. 23, *e–f*), and grass figures like those of the Apinayé.[108] Trick carvings (pl. 24, *o*), games of patience (pl. 24, *m*), and cat's cradle serve for the amusement of bigger boys and girls.

THE BOYS' CLASS

At about six years of age the boys begin to have a sense of age-class solidarity, a fact that strongly affects their relations with their families. No one urges them to form such a company, which is joined quite spontaneously, by some of them earlier, by others later. This is a natural consequence of an environment surcharged with a socioceremonial spirit. As their model they take the youngest of the four official age classes, and whenever this group plays its part in a major ceremonial this has an obviously stimulating effect on the minors.

I first observed this in 1930 at the second ketúaye of the subsequent põhjtíkama class. About fifteen boys (from among twice that number), mostly six to eight years old united as an unofficial class. *On their own request* the council appointed an instructor, mekapónkate, for them; and he taught them to plait, shoot, sing and dance, explained the ceremonial, and enjoined upon them to be honest and comradely. They went jointly to bathe and hunt, arranged races and log races—in short, prepared in every respect for their future status as a recognized class. The elders even gave them a class name—Pądntųktíkama (pądntųkti, black arara). Three years later the põhjtíkama completed their cycle of initiation and precipitated a shift of age classes in the plaza; and the minors were then admitted as the junior eastern class, mepantúa, to the northeast station there, acquiring the name Kra'tãkama. As already stated, they began racing against the western mepantúa, a group on the average ten years older. In the following year, when subjected to their first ketúaye, they had their organization completed.

On my return in 1935 I found a new boys' class in process of formation. In 1936 I saw them nicely imitating the adults' erection of a hadre mast at the opening of the vų'tę' period. A group of hunters comprising members of both age-class moieties had prepared a mast 6 m. high outside the village. Having wound foliage round it and tied on the sliced game, they carried it into the village at a trot. Ahead of them a man came dashing and uttering piercing yells; in the center of the plaza he dug a hole for the post. At once the women came rushing up from all directions. The hunters planted the pole in the pit and held it erect, but pretended to let it drop now in one direction, now in the other, which naturally made the women run thither. At last the men laid down the mast, and the women stripped it pell-mell while one of the Clowns at the last moment tried to drag it away. Hardly was this

[108] Nimuendajú, The Apinayé, 108 f.

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

scene over before several other Clowns came running with a small, gnarled tree from which intestines, pieces of wood, but also some slices of good meat were suspended, of which the women likewise took possession.

On the following day the boys went hunting and killed a number of small birds and steppe rats. They tied their spoils to a tree, dragged it to the plaza, and set it upright, while the little girls came running from all sides to pillage it. Other boys had tied their game to the tip of their long tuft of hair and ran across the plaza, chased by the girls, who finally despoiled them of the booty.

GROWING GIRLS

At the age of boys beginning to organize, the girls already assist their mothers at home and in the plantations and mostly excel them as dancers and singers in the plaza. Public opinion exacts competence in both spheres. A girl unfit for domestic and farming labor will not readily find a husband; but the collaboration of girls in the chanting and dancing that is indispensable for every festival and ceremonial is considered equally important. No Timbira mother would restrain her daughter from attending a dance on the ground of work to be done at home or in the plots. If there are too few girls in the plaza for a dance, the truants are publicly reproved by the elders, who may send specially delegated men to fetch them out of their maternal homes. One of these messengers advances the tip of his sword-club toward the girl, who is obliged to clasp it, and he then leads her by the club to the plaza. Such treatment may be accorded to girls no older than ten, and at about twelve both sexes are in the thick of the manifold socioceremonial life of age classes, festive societies, and other units.

SOCIAL RELATIONS OF THE SEXES

Before discussing the relations of the sexes during and prior to wedlock, I wish to state explicitly what is sufficiently apparent from the description of social structure: Neither sex considers the other inferior; the sexes have distinct functions, not higher and lower ones. Of course there are no feminine chiefs or councilors, and the religious ceremonies on behalf of the commonweal are always performed by men. Further, there is no preponderantly feminine organization. On the other hand, women not only own dwellings and plantations, but also have a claim on the children, and except in warfare nothing is undertaken without feminine participation, whence the vụ'tẹ' institution (p. 92), the girl associates in the festive societies and the boys' initiation (p. 95 f.), and the resulting membership of women in the hạmrén (p. 97 f.). There is but a single wholly masculine organization, that of the King Vultures; and this is due to their comprising all the honorary chiefs, which automatically excludes women since female chiefs are unknown. The two types of formalized friendship likewise embrace both sexes, even though the circumstances in which the kwụ'nõ bond is established restrict the number of females capable of entering it (p. 104).

In contrast to tribes with masculine societies for terrorizing women or with other methods of frightening them,[200] the Rąmkõ'kamekra seem to be above all interested in a merry comradeship of the two sexes. This attitude rests on the manifest appreciation of feminine personality. If a girl or woman differs in opinion from a man and agreement is hopeless, the matter is allowed to rest; it would be regarded as mean and ridiculous for a man to get angry, let alone try coercion. All relations rest on free consent within the tribal code. Accordingly rape was unknown, the

[200] Nimuendajú and Lowie, The Associations of the Šerénte, 415.